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Fallen/Lifted

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FALLEN / LIFTED

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Fine Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University.

by

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To Hollin Norwood for your love and your thread.

*“We wanderers, ever seeking the lonelier way, begin no day where we have ended
another day: and no sunrise finds us where sunset left us.”*
-Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*

For Alexander Kristoff Radloff. 1987-2014

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Abstract

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Virginia Commonwealth University, 2015

Susan Iverson, Professor, Craft/Material Studies

I use found botanical material such as leaves, seedpods, and branches to explore human connection to the physical world. By combining these organic objects with the rich traditions of needlecraft, I bind nature and the human touch. Both tender and ruthless, this intricate stitch work communicates the idea that our relationship with the natural world is both tenuously fragile and infinitely complex.

The way I think about and make art mirrors the way I think about my life and how I walk through the world. What I do is about elevating details. It is about noticing cycles and connections. It is about regarding a familiar object in a new way. It's about seeing things and considering their connection to you, their potential futures and possible pasts. There is

a depth and an importance to what is present, and what is absent. Invisible narratives are woven into and around each piece, each interaction. As I gather materials with which to work, I consider what connections might exist between us, or how each object might be related to another. I am a cartographer, drawing and plotting an imaginary map, from one object to the next, intervening with each. These objects naturally fit into categories, which relate to my own experiences, but also to their origins and how they came into my hands. The vertices of experience and the actual life trajectory of an object are what interest me the most; the points at which the object and I intersect.

This document was created in Microsoft Word 2000.

Lifted: The Lure

A small, soft black and white feather rests in my palm. It's gently curved, like a quickly scrawled letter c, with a delicate barred pattern. Between the zig-zagging cream and taupe bands, there are two precise rows of stitching in a single red thread, perfectly mimicking the undulations in the feather's striation. In my hand it feels almost weightless...if I had my eyes closed I don't know that I would detect its presence. As I regard the thing in my hand, I am drawn into thinking about the origin of the feather. Long before it came into my hands, it was quite attached to the side or belly of a mallard duck, a male, most likely; called a drake. It was a handsome article of purpose, keeping him warm and waterproofed as he flew and bobbed, through air and water.

When our drake met his end, this particular feather, along with the rest of his plumage was plucked and packaged. Saved or sold, these packets of feathers are valuable to those who tie flies to use for fly-fishing.

Mallard ducks spend the majority of their days dipping head first into ponds and streams in search of food; mostly invertebrates but on occasion, adolescent fish, or fry, as they are called. Most likely, the drake in question would have eaten his fair share of trout fry. For many anglers, adult trout are a coveted catch. These fishermen often use hand-tied flies,

crafted from thread, animal hair and feathers, notably, mallard feathers. As the flank feather is twisted into an exquisite fly and used as a lure, a small part of this drake is destined to go on catching fish, as it did every day of its life. When I think about the continuation of this cycle there seems to be some level of justice and beauty in the balance.

I have known some particularly skilled anglers in my life, all of them devoted to the craft of tying their own flies. One particularly avid fisherman was seen from time to time scavenging the roadsides for creatures of unfortunate circumstance; harvesting that which he could find use for in his craft. Should he find a freshly killed fox or a muskrat, he might stop to pick it up, seeing an opportunity to blend and twist its fur into a fly, making a most life-like replica of a Caddis or Stone fly nymph. Details are an important consideration in fly tying. Flies which imitate specific insects who skim or float on the surface must have the ability to float themselves. The appropriate material, perhaps hollow deer or elk hairs, must be employed, while still maintaining perfect mimicry. To be successful the fisherman must put himself in the mindset of the fish; to anticipate its desires and habits, to understand its wants and needs in order to play to them accordingly. He must intrinsically know both his materials and his audience. For this attentiveness I greatly admire the fly-tying angler.

The process of tying flies by hand often involves thread as well. We, the fly-tying fisherman and I, might have used similar techniques and materials as we enacted our

designs upon the feather. The angler's desire, however, would be to turn this feather into the most intriguing, most delicious, most lively version of itself. Mine is to make this feather remarkable in its essence, to enliven it. I want whoever sees this feather to consider it for what it is; part of a bird, which has come into my hands and has been tenderly embroidered with scarlet thread between its narrow banding. By stitching into this feather, I have intervened with the expectations we have about this object, pushing it beyond itself. The interaction is subtle but remarkable, creating a sense of wonder. I want to encourage a second look, a second thought, a moment more of consideration.

And so it may seem that the angler and I are working a somewhat similar angle in our intentions for this feather. We want to take this feather in our hands, regard it and render it anew, allow it to transcend itself, make it incredible in its essence, for what it is and for what it is not.

That it has been embellished by my delicate crimson thread, and viewed by your eyes is an unexpected, but perhaps noble end for it. I have no way of knowing what its real end will be, once it passes from my hands. I hope that it should be as magical as the mimicry of a perfectly tied fly, or as dignified as if it had gone entirely through the courses of nature still attached to the drake; a stately master of his waters, commander of his feathers, director of his life.

The angler in my mind stands alone in a cold stream, the boulders that border the narrow mountain stream are mossy and slick. They create fast moving channels with frothing water, high in oxygen. Trout love these streams and they congregate in the small pools behind the amassed rocks where the current is lessened, called eddies. Great hemlock trees line the banks, turning what sunlight penetrates their needles into lacy patterns on the green suede of the moss covered forest floor. Far down stream, where the stream finds itself less hurriedly rushing toward it's future, there is a sleeping duck, standing on one foot, on a rock. The fisherman casts. A small, black and white banded feather wrapped tediously and meticulously in thread floats gracefully through the air, curving a long arc towards the water.



Figure 1. *Lifted: The Lure*

Roots / The Nature of Arches

“It is the nature of truth to struggle to the light.” Wilkie Collins

Almost everywhere you stand on this Planet, save for some very remote and barren biomes, a tree will be visible. Some, elegant and broad, reaching ever outward and upward, encompassing great swaths of space as they drink in abundant sunshine. Others intentionally planted, their estimated futures a part of some planned and plotted design. Even more crowded, shooting taller and taller, in their race to the sky, their need to consume more light than their forest brethren is visible to all who should happen to inspect the canopy. Those left below, sucking in whatever light is left for them, doomed to an undernourished existence.

I had a favorite tree. It was an American Beech; thin with bright emerald leaves. It grew on top of a hill, in the middle of a Norway Spruce forest, which was as dark and foreboding as it sounds. The Norway Spruce trees were planted by someone, fifty to seventy five years ago, who wanted a fast growing, drought tolerant crop, either for lumber, or to cut and sell as Christmas Trees. In any case, the trees were never cut for either purpose, and they grew to a magnificent height, some of them almost to a hundred feet into the sky, the tallest

reaches of the species. This spruce forest was a monoculture; comprised of only one type of tree. Forests such as this don't function in the way diversely wooded forests do. These trees are all the same, hunger for the same portion of light and have the same rate of growth. They shoot up, taller and spindlier by the year, racing towards the light, only the needles in the upper reaches gaining enough access to open sky, turning the golden light into green needles. The understory, all that remains below in the shadows is dead. This makes for a rather gloomy experience for anyone walking the floor, dark and silent, footsteps muffled by a carpet of needles that is more of a snowfall than a carpet, considering it is several feet thick. There is occasionally chirping and scrambling of red squirrels who feast on the green cones which drop from the upper branches. Since there are no leafy deciduous trees to defray gusts of wind, this Norway Spruce forest is particularly susceptible to members of it's stand being blown over.

Among these tall, quiet trees there is a patch of intermittent sunlight; inconsistent but more present than not. A Spruce has blown over, leaving a swath of open sky. The light, which reaches the forest floor through this narrow keyhole, seems almost dazzling in contrast to the dim surroundings. It was in this unlikely patch of light where my favorite tree grew, the slight American Beech. It is incorrect, actually to say that it grew there in the sun, but towards it, more accurately, as it's roots locked it to the Earth ten or fifteen feet from this spot. While it grew upward, it also grew in a rather acute, but graceful arch, ten or fifteen feet high at its peak. This unusual feat of phototropism allowed this tree to grow ever towards the brightest light, its leaves finally reaching direct sun after nearly a decade from

the day it sprouted.

What tenacity and resilience that little beech represented for me, dropping and re-growing leaves ten times before any of them tasted the sweet reward of sunlight. That tree always seemed to me to be the recipient of such improbable circumstance. It was an unlikely location for this little seeding to find itself, pushing up out of the dark soil into a dismal and nearly eternal dim. Even more implausible that it should live so long, in a particularly precarious position, with brilliant green leaves, fluttering about, each one a proud flag waving; victorious. The predicament of this tree also seemed somehow unfair, if you can ever apply the principles of fairness to the natural world. The longer this little Beech tree strived toward the light it so desperately needed, the weaker its backwards bending trunk became and the stronger the forces of physics enacted upon those roots which anchored the little tree to life. I remember pondering this many times, alone with the American Beech who bowed forever to the harsh laws of nature. I stood with it in the single island of sunlight and touched its twisted, iron-like trunk, feeling like I knew something of its struggle, while the unregarding Spruce trees towered silently above us.

I once walked in that Spruce grove with a dear friend, the aforementioned angler and discussed this tree, it's likelihood of survival, the color of it's leaves, how we enjoyed seeing it as we came around the curve in the path through the grove. We spoke of how we loved it for its beauty. Not beauty in the sense of perfection, we had said, but in the sense that there was something so alive about its unexpectedness, its strength.

I have now outlived that tree, which only ever grew to be as thick as my arm, and I have outlived my friend, who died suddenly, but not entirely unexpectedly, just before his twenty-seventh birthday.

My friend lived his life struggling to find a place in which to fit, to rest, to grow. He was a trout searching forever for the eddy that never appeared. The anguish of this pursuit consumed him until he gave in to his exhaustion. At his wake I whispered my final goodbyes to him, choking on my words. He was so still in the coffin, and perhaps it was this unresponsive motionlessness that provoked me to touch him one last time. As my fingers brushed the fiber of the sweater on his upper arm what I felt underneath was not human flesh in any way I had ever known it. Under my palm was nothing human, but wood, hard and unforgiving. I removed my hand. I stood on wobbly legs, unsure of their capacity to hold me upright. Somehow I walked away, and as I did, an image surfaced in my mind of that forsaken little American Beech that we both so loved.

“When Audobon was young, in Kentucky, in love with his wife Lucy, he painted his “Passenger Pigeon”- a pair of them- and to some of us it is his greatest picture. The curve of the soft necks, the lift of shining wings, are eloquent unconsciously, of a tenderness and passion not at all theirs. It is on a Beech bough that he has perched his pigeon pair, and

two withered beechen leaves tell us that the season is autumn when the mast is ripe. An autumn that will not come again but lingers, immortal, in those leaves that cannot fall.”

-Donald Culross Peattie, A Natural History of Trees



Figure 2. *Passenger Pigeon. John James Audubon*

Record / Dissolve

It is a cold, rainy day, and I perch on the smooth wooden floor of a well-used lean-to in the middle of a Hemlock forest. The raindrops are all I can hear, hitting the steep roof and the dark, dramatic branches of the hemlocks. Water is splashing off onto the wild raspberry brambles and beech saplings that are shooting up all around. I still picture this place without this verdant understory; fresh and clearly cut. More than a decade ago that was, when the ground here was barren of any forest succession, and before the Spruce trees downed in the winter wind were processed for lumber and hauled up high on this hill to become the hewn shelter under which I sit.

I can see through the rain, to my right, a ring of cut logs, now decaying, around a smaller ring of stones. Darkened from the rain, these logs and rocks showcase their inhabitants; the brilliant red Efts that congregate here each spring. These juvenile Eastern Newts are like radiant orange and red gems studding the forest floor. As they mature from a larval stage in a pond, Eastern Newts grow legs and tails, becoming more salamander-like in their appearance. They also lose their gills during this phase, and learn to breathe with lungs. They raise themselves up out of their aquatic habitats, all they have ever known. On unsteady legs they seek dry land, wobbling toward their uncertain futures. In leaving their

ponds, they ensure genetic diversity for the species, but risk their lives for this endeavor.

I sit on the dry but dusty timber floor, hunched under a quilt to keep away the chill of this rain. The quilt is warm and soft, and my body is more comfortable wrapped inside of it than it would be without. Quilts are made from scraps, pieces of cloth, strips and fragments. The quilt wrapped around my shoulders is like any quilt in its construction, but on the surface of the fabric is a written record of every memory I can recall concerning a certain relationship from my past, some of which take place in the very lean-to, on the very floor where I sit now. It has felt important to record these memories, as accurately as I can, because for some unknown reason, everything seemed to be slipping away. The memories of this friendship, which I scribed to the fiber of the quilt, were all I had of a friendship that had become unrecognizable to me. I feel as though my friend, as life has revoked its gifts from him one by one, has become someone I no longer know.

I rise from the floor and stretch, touching my toes with my fingers. The quilt slides forward on my back, sweeping over the curve in my spine, reaching the floor, and enclosing me in a dim tent of ink and cloth. I stand, like the Efts, on unsteady legs, only mine still sleepy, full of pins and needles. I move forward, towards the edge of the lean-to. I step out from under the eave, the quilt still over me, and the rain is hard, relentless, coming and coming and coming, down and down and down. Soaked. Bathed. Washed. New. My hair is glued with wet to my face and neck. As the water falls from the sky, it rinses me; carrying away everything. Runoff. The ink, which has so dutifully emblazoned my memories onto the cloth

of this quilt is now freed; dissolving into soft, unrecognizable stains, blooming over the fabric, bleeding through layers of fiber until it can go no further. The weight of the world in water falls from the sky, and the quilt becomes heavier and heavier. I stand on the needle-soft, rain soaked ground, thinking about where I've come from and what has brought me to this place. I stand there, bathed in rain and streaked in ink, learning how to breathe.



Figure 3. *Quilts For Alexander: Record / Dissolve*

The Weight of Worry / The Sinking Stone

There is a dock on a pond, bathed in the light of a nearly full moon. To the north of this pond, by a few hundred yards in a Norway Spruce forest, pitch scented and pitch black at this time of night, despite the moon. To the west is a small tributary stream, enough to feed the pond, but too small to support the stocked population of trout who call this home. In their search for cool, oxygen rich water the trout gather in the deepest pool the stream has to offer, which happens to be right at its base, where its waters flow into the pond. In this tiny delta the trout, not tiny fry anymore, but none more than a foot in length, swim lethargically in a tight but slow rotation, too warm and malnourished to thrive. It is here that a Great Blue Heron lurks, tall, quiet. Waiting, watching. The Heron, who would lurk patient and still for hours, need not do so here. He stands, plucking trout from the water one after another, his long, beautiful neck curving, arcing, and snapping down at lightening speed. The trout, not noticing the sinuous shadow darting over the water until it's far too late, never stand a chance.

If you were to follow this stream, until it becomes so shallow it is barely a trickle running through the grass, it would lead you underground, under a gently curving dirt road. It would re-emerge and as it gained elevation, it would become a more defined stream, with a

steep ravine on it's north side. This is a forest stream, spring fed, cool and rocky. From this stream the Eastern Newts emerge, having traveled up a half-mile from the pond, a great feat for such a miniscule creature. They scale the ravine, putting their new legs and lungs to the test. They cross the road, traversing at least another half mile of rough terrain, risking everything to find each other in a ring of stones within a ring of logs.

Back on the dock, floating above the surface of the pond, I sit, stone still, listening to the sound of frogs, and crickets and the occasional owl, hooting down from the Spruce. The metal is cool under my back, the air is damp and humid. I'm feeling grounded, although I am actually floating. Atop of me is another quilt, but this quilt is different. It is not made from soft cloth, but from layers of silk, knotted together. The silk is translucent, allowing the light from the moon to illuminate my skin, my feet, my hands. Instead of a warm layer of batting, this quilt is embedded with hundreds of river rocks. These stones are small and smooth, about the size of a rock you might pick up near the water's edge, and rub in your hand for a few moments before absently slipping it into your pocket. Worry stones, reminding us of small moments of pain, little burdens. We move them methodically around in our hands or play inside pickets. Fiddle and think.

I see the angler again, in my mind, and the fast water rushing by him as he stands heron-still in the churning pool. The water hastens here, whipping past large boulders and the smooth, steep banks. In its urgent haste, it picks up small stones and debris, the quick

current carrying them along. Down, down, down the stream, past the sleeping duck to a bend in its course, a tight meander. Slowing here, the alluvium is dropped from the current to the banks and the bottom, bit by bit.

“Every stream, as soon as it loses the clear eyed speed of it’s youth among the hills or mountains, begins to drop its load of silt as, with slackened velocity in the lowlands, it is no longer able to carry the burden of its particles.” –Donald Culross Peattie, A Natural History of Trees

As the river deposits its rocks, so do we let go our burdens, rarely carrying them with us all through the course of our lives. We release them; the stones from our pockets; dropping them back to the ground, a porch step, a dresser top, a mason jar full of such like objects.

Life’s small painful jabs are something we are familiar with; we feel them, we carry them, we let them go. For my friend, this was not the case; these small wounds wrote themselves into an equation for which the sum amounted to an unbearably heavy burden. This weight wove itself into his life, and transformed him and our friendship forever.

My dear friend for whom I made a quilt of remembrances. For whom I lay under a stone filled shroud, thinking of how it might feel to exist as he does. My dear friend who taught me many years ago to tie a fly, my friend who will die within six months. He never found the resting spot, the eddy, the place to lay down his afflictions.

I am looking up at the sky above me, vast and full of night sounds. Below me, the erratic flash of fish scales are glinting in the moonlight. The rock filled quilt lies over my body as I consider this, pressing me down, cold and heavy. The weight of this worry is oppressive, restricting my breath. As my chest arduously rises and quickly falls, I am very aware of the thinness of the dock, which holds me just above the thick black water.



Figure 4. *Quilts for Alexander: The Sum*

Aria for the Golden Hour

In Japanese, there is a word, *Kodama*, which refers to a special feeling of kinship with the heart of a tree. George Nakashima in his book, *The Soul of a Tree*, discusses this kinship and respect for the tree in regard to how we use it, offering the tree a second life of dignity and strength.

It is strange to think of a tree as having a life, as I don't often regard non-cognizant entities in that way. However, they are most certainly alive. When I look at a tree, I notice the bark or lack of bark, a visible shield, a coat of armor. There are holes in this armor; the raised welts, burls, left from some disease, or pest, or penknife.

The tree becomes a product of its surroundings, at the mercy of its environment, nourished by soil only as far as its roots can reach.

Our drake rests on a rock near a shallow pool in the crook of a river, unaware of the fox creeping up behind it. Perhaps this is the very same fox who will later meet his death on a road shoulder, his fur to be used by a resourceful fly fisherman. For now, though, the hungry fox attacks. The duck succumbs quickly, not without fight, but without

hope, to the fox's sharp teeth. The fox carries his meal to a safe, secluded spot, maybe a nearby Spruce grove, to eat what he can, leaving the rest; feathers, bones, feet.

Mainly comprised of keratin, the feather would be rapidly devoured by soil dwelling bacteria who have evolved to produce an enzyme called keratinase which allows them to feast on feathers, hair, fur, claws, horns, scales and nails. These bacteria have adapted this specific enzyme should an extremely rare opportunity to feast on one of these delicacies present itself in their single-celled lifetime. In no time at all, the feather would disappear, completely consumed by the bacteria. In turn, the bacteria would return nutrients to the earth, enriching the soil, allowing the forest to thrive. Although this is but a minute fraction of a fraction of what takes place in any given square inch of the earth on any given day, here we perhaps glimpse a moment of the magnificent dignity and elegance of an ecosystem. Giving and taking and giving again.

The tree grows and produces leaves, soaks in sunlight and carbon dioxide, releases oxygen. It stands a silent guard over its small plot of soil. All trees come forth from the depths of the soil and sustain themselves on nutrients from decaying matter, plant and animal. Actual nutrients, microscopic particles, chemical fragments...bit by bit, the feather becomes the tree.

In Richmond, there is a massive Ginkgo tree growing in what was the first public cemetery in the city. More than 250 years old, the cemetery has become the permanent resting place

for over a thousand people. When I think about the imagined feather being broken down and absorbed into the hypothetical tree, it is difficult not to consider the gravity of this very real tree. Each year, it grows a beautiful crop of fan shaped leaves, bright bottle green in the spring and summer, changing to intense gold in the fall. The leaves hang onto their branches until late in the autumn when one day, they will all begin to fall at once. The tree undresses, unburdening itself quickly, transforming the ground of the cemetery into a golden carpet, leaving only the upright gravestones and monuments visible.

It was from this gilded ground that I was impelled to gather a handful of leaves last autumn. After contemplating these leaves for several months, living with them as they faded and grew more and more brittle, I knew that these leaves needed to be used in a way which would outwardly express the weight and significance that was intrinsic to them, on a molecular level. The river stones tied through each leaf are a literal weight, pulling the leaves down towards the earth from their suspended placement. Although they are very much being held down by these stones, these weights, there is also a sense of uplifting, of rising above. These leaves are, in a sense, frozen in a moment of their cycle, of coming from all that is contained in the earth beneath the tree, rising from it to flutter in the breeze and taste the sun, and falling back down to deteriorate into ground once more; succumbing to the cycle.



Figure 5. *Aria for the Golden Hour*

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APPENDIX A

THESIS INSTALLATION: THE FINAL MOMENT

As these materials have found their way into my hands, these completed works have found their way into a small, darkened space where they will sing silently together until they are dismantled, and laid to rest, one by one. The space is quiet, reflective and somber. The walls are the blue-gray of the darkest, thickest water, the deepest moonless midnight. Somewhere between the slate and the storm cloud, these objects shimmer, floating, holding the space. Although they are slight and minimal, they demand a closer focus. The loneliness of isolation, the loss of familiarity, the glimmer of hope in the darkness, the fragments and traces of human touch, of interaction, of connection of what is missing and of what remains.



Figure 6. *One For Sorrow*

APPENDIX B

BRUISES

I have collected, recorded and dissolved the memories of the closest friendship I ever experienced. This relationship was an impetus for me to feel and express the affliction, importance and impermanence of memory through my explorations of accumulation, dissolution and preservation. By recording and dissolving my memories, I am capturing the process of deterioration of memory by transforming written language into an abstract visual experience.

I used a very specific pen with which to record these memories, and when it was exposed to water, the ink dissolved and bloomed into its constituent colors. Where once there was text, there was now imagery resembling a bruise, purple and soft with a prism at its edges. Beautiful decay.



Figure 7. *Drained*

APPENDIX C

TO TIE, TO BIND, TO BRING TOGETHER

When I stitch, I mend and maim my materials. Piercing and puncturing, loving and lacing. I bring together materials which represent the union of humanity and the physical world. I have branched out over the last two years to use my thread in a myriad of ways, but I began by using a specific vein of stitch patterns known as insertion stitches or joining stitches. I wanted to target these stitches particularly because they were technically excellent for the type materials I was using and they matched my aesthetic vision, but also they reference the joining together of two entities. I wanted very much for my involvement with the materials, the connection, to be full of beauty. The notion of lifting the spirit through beauty is important to me. Although our relationship with the natural world is one that can be ruthless and numb, we are also capable of having a connection that is hopeful and beautiful at its essence.



Figure 8. *Lift*



Figure 9. *Eventual Expanse*

APPENDIX D

INFLUENCES

Barbara Hurd's writing has forever inspired a need to take the time to delve deeply when thinking and considering an object. Since reading her work, I have a renewed sense of respect and reverence for the poetry in details and the interconnectivity of all objects and beings.

Andy Goldsworthy's use of simplicity and strict rules for art making have always influenced me, since I saw his work as a child. I feel as though I share his passion for facilitating the transcendence of honest and humble natural materials.

Guiseppe Penone has an eye for seeing objects at their essence, and for using materials honestly and truthfully. The Arte Povera idea of making art with simplicity and honesty with few external materials is something I have taken to heart as well.

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John Jauquet Award, Buffalo State College
- 2008 Hyatt Award in the Buffalo State Fibers Department, Buffalo State College 2006
Best in Show & 1st Place, NYS Women's Federation Annual Art Competition

E x h i b i t i o n s

- 2015 Arboreal (Solo Exhibition), Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens, Richmond, VA
Fallen / Lifted (MFA Thesis Exhibition), Anderson Gallery, Richmond, VA
Images Extracted from Nature, Cary House Gallery, Salem NY (expected)
- 2014 Hillary Fayle & Yari Ostovany, Courthouse Gallery, Lake George, NY
Where Words Are Not Enough, Artspace, Richmond, VA
Hidden Gallery Walk, Palenville NY
- 2013 Ornantur Foliis, (Solo Exhibition), Kinetic Gallery, Geneseo, NY
Living Exhibition, Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Art Center, Solomons, MD
Art In Craft Media, Burchfield Penney Art Center, Buffalo, NY (Also 2011)
- 2012 100 American Craftsmen, Kenan Center, Lockport, NY (2011)
Bounty, Indigo Gallery, Buffalo, NY

- Crafts National, Mulvane Art Museum, Topeka, KS
- Uncommon Threads, Studio Hart, Buffalo, NY
- Banality and Grace, Galeria X, Bratislava, Slovakia
- 2011 Fiber Arts Initiative, Impact Artists Gallery, Buffalo, NY
- Artists on the Point, The Rustic, Dexter, NY
- 2010 Mud & Silk, (Solo Exhibition), Indigo Gallery, Buffalo, NY
- Thread + Ink, (Solo Exhibition), North Creek Depot Museum, North Creek, NY
- Miniature Textiles Exhibition, Galeria X, Bratislava, Slovakia
- School of Design Exhibition, Czurler-Nelson Gallery, Buffalo NY (2008-09)
- Sustainable Design Conference Exhibition, FIIT, NYC, NY

P u b l i c a t i o n , R e s i d e n c i e s & O t h e r

- 2015 Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, Pentaculum Forum Attendee, Gatlinburg, TN
- 'Genome-Scale Algorithm Design', Cambridge University Press (UK), Cover Art
- Handwerken Magazine (Denmark), January Issue
- 'Textile Nature' (UK), Featured artist. Batsford Books. (Expected)
- 'Handmade Design' (China), Featured artist. Chirps&Mews Publishing. (Expected)
- 2014 Featured on www.thisiscolossal.com, June 26
- Featured on www.boredpanda.com, June 27
- Featured on www.demilked.com, June, 27
- Featured on www.thevisualnews.com, June 30
- Buffalo Spree Magazine, January Issue, Cover Artist
- Buffalo Artists and Teachers Collaborative Grant, Participant, Buffalo, NY
- 2013 Buffalo Artists and Teachers Collaborative Grant, Participant, Buffalo, NY
- 2012 Embroidery Magazine (UK), May/June Issue, Cover Artist
- Fiber Art Now Magazine, Spring Issue, Cover Artist
- Burchfield Penney Living Legacy Program, Buffalo, NY
- Platte Clove Artist Residency, Arkville, NY
- 2011 Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester, NY, Representation in Gallery Shop

E x p e r i e n c e

- 2015 Adjunct Professor, Fibers & Textiles, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond VA
- 2015 Artist Assistant, Aiding Kiyomi Iwata in preparation for retrospective exhibition, Richmond VA (also 2014)
- 2013 Substitute Teacher, South Lewis School District, Turin, NY (also 2012)

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